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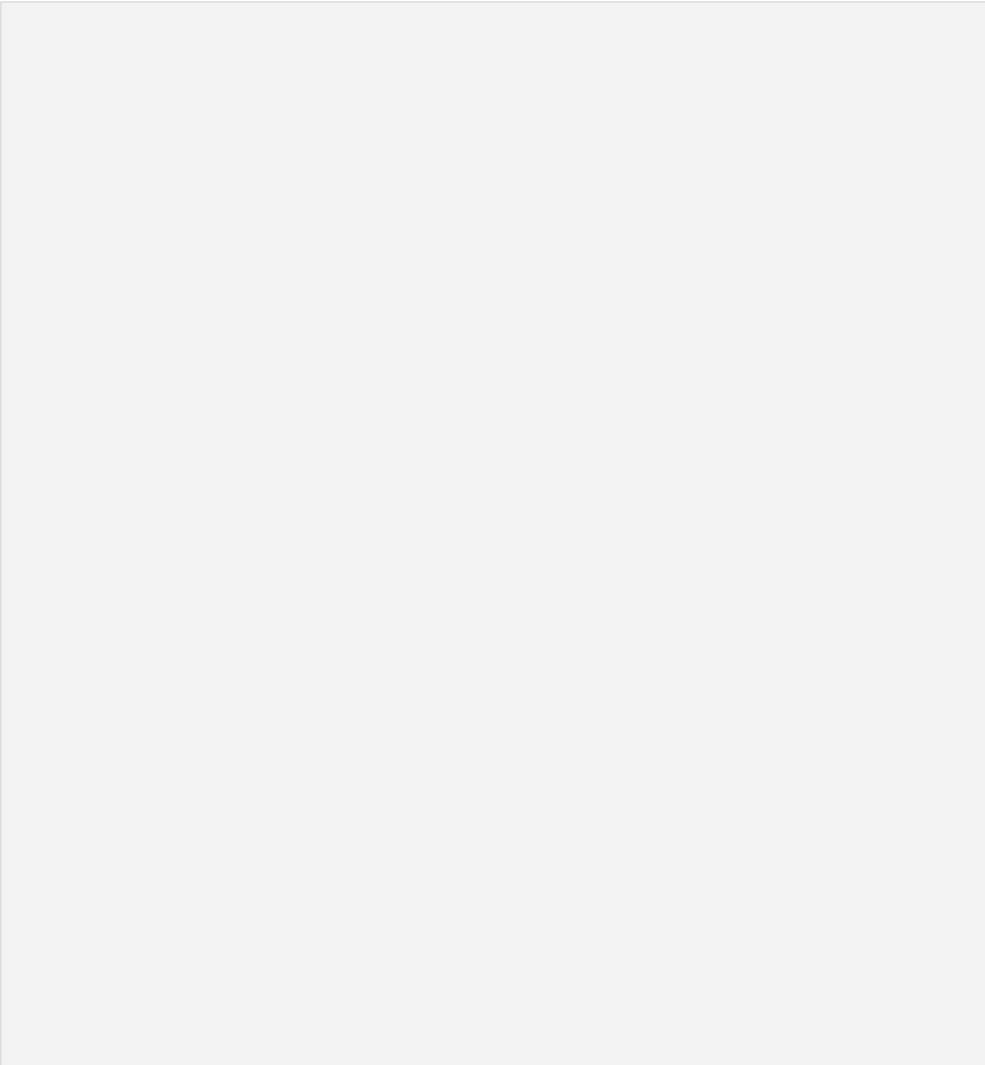
NAVY MEDICINE IN FOCUS

Naval Hospital Bremerton Looks to Break Donated Food Record

BY VJOHNSON – JUNE 16, 2014
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Mass Communications Specialist 1st Class James Evans Coyle, Naval Hospital Bremerton Public Affairs

Naval Hospital Bremerton (NHB) staff members on a mission to help knock out hunger in Kitsap County have posted food donations receptacles at various spots throughout the hospital. The annual “Feds Feed Families” food drive started June 1 and runs until Aug. 27.



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Hospital Corpsman 2nd Class Nathan L. Cole of Naval Hospital Bremerton's Orthopedic Department drops off a donated supply of boxed food to assist the command's 'Feds Feed Families' food drive that started on June 1 and continues until the end of August. Food banks across the country have traditionally received supplies during the holiday seasons but tend to lag during the summer months. The 'Feds Feed Families' effort hopes to alleviate any shortcoming(s) for those in need (Photo by Douglas Stutz NHB Public Affairs).

According to co-coordinator of the food drive, Hospital Corpsman 2nd Class Jeremiah Hays of NHB's Oral Surgery Department, the goal of 2014 is to surpass the mark of more than 400 pounds of food collected in 2013.

"We just want people to donate what they can. Local food banks will ensure that all the food donated will be given out to families in need. Everything will definitely get eaten," said Hays.

Since the campaign began in 2009, Federal workers have donated and collected 24.1 million pounds of food to support families nationwide. According to Hays the United States Navy collected more than 50 percent of all the food donated through the Department of Defense in 2013. That total came to more than 1.2 million pounds.

"There's so many people coming and going through the hospital. Maybe they'll make a mental note of seeing the food donation boxes and know they will be coming back with extra food in hand to donate. That's why we're

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successful,” said Hays.

The donated food has been weighed weekly and distributed to local food bank outlets including the Central Kitsap Food Bank in nearby Silverdale, Wash. Director of the Central Kitsap Food Bank Chris Benson noted without the donations the food banks would not be in operation.

“The military aspect in this region of Washington has always been very supportive. We started back in 1989, and it’s really a testament to our accomplishments. Without the help from commands like Naval Hospital Bremerton and the ships and submarines that donate the food is how we’re in a position to help out all the families and individuals who need this food to survive,” said Benson.

Returning food donator Heather Farmington of Port Orchard, Wash., gave personal examples of how utilizing her local food bank while her husband was separated by the military 10 years ago.

“Due to a series of unfortunate events my spouse was unable to continue working at his job in the United States Air Force. Suddenly the money ran out and we couldn’t pay our bills. We had two kids and no job prospects. Getting decent food was never a problem because we had our local food bank there to help us out twice a week. Things eventually got better for us as a family and I remember back on those times. I like to help out when I can because I know it’s helping families, somewhere,” said Farmington.

For more information on how you can donate visit the “Feds Feeding Families website at <http://www.usda.gov/wps/portal/usda/usdahome?navid=feds-feed-families>



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